

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2238
INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 00110

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS/ PFOR,ET,FT,FR
SUBJECT: EPMG VIEWS ON TFAI

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 12616, B. USUN 6137

SUMMARY: EPMG FONMIN DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR DAY-TO-DAY
DJIBOUTI POLICY PREDICTED IMPROVED EPMG-GOF COOPERATION
OVER NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS. EPMG TAKING STRONG LINE ON
JANUARY PARIS CONFERENCE AND WILL APPARENTLY INSIST ON
UNI, MLD, AND MPL PARTICIPATION. EPMG NOW APPARENTLY
VIEWING HASSAN GOULED AND LPAI IN MORE POSITIVE LIGHT,
AND ATTEMPTING TO ASSIST "PRO-INDEPENDENCE FACTION" IN
LPAI IN INTERNAL STRUGGLE WITH "PRO-SOMALI FACTION" LED
BY AHMED DINI. USG NOT PAYING ENOUGH ATTENTION TO DJIBOUTI
PROBLEM. PROBLEM SERIOUS, AND IF VARIOUS PARTIES MISREAD
SIGNALS, SOURCE DEFINITELY EXPECTED WAR IN AREA. END
SUMMARY.
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1. EMBOFFS CALLED ON BERHANU DINKA, CHIEF AFRICAN
DIVISION MOFA, JANUARY 6 TO REVIEW DEVELOPMENTS WITH
RESPECT TO DJIBOUTI. BERHANU INDICATED THAT MAJOR
OUTCOME VISIT PIERRE TAITTINGER GOF MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS WAS THAT GOF MUCH BETTER INFORMED
ON EPMG POSITION ON DJIBOUTI. ETHIOPIANS HAD
MADE CLEAR TO FRENCH THAT THEY UNHAPPY WITH GOF
ACTIONS IN BRINGING ABOUT FALL OF ALI AREF AND SINCE,
AND HAD BROUGHT HOME TO FRENCH THAT EPMG WOULD REACT
STRONGLY TO ANY FURTHER MOVES BY GOF WHICH WERE CON-

SIDERED PRO-SOMALI. NOTING THAT HE EXPECTED EPMG-GOF RELATIONS TO IMPROVE OVER NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS, BERHANU STATED THAT GOF WAS ATTEMPTING IN ITS OWN WAY TO CREATE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONALY UNITY FOR DJIBOUTI AND WAS NOW PERHAPS HAVING SOME SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT PRESENT LEADERSHIP GROUP.

2. BERHANU THEN SHIFTED TO PROBLEMS FRENCH HAVING INTERNALLY, BOTH WITHIN FOREIGN MINISTRY AND BETWEEN QUAI AND DOM-TOM. HE STATED THAT FONMIN KIFLE HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM FRENCH DURING HIS PARI SVISIT THAT FRENCH WOULD MAKE STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF EPMG POSITION ON DJIBOUTI AT UN. DESPITE CONTINUING EPMG EFFORTS, FRENCH STATEMENT (REF. B) WAS NOT MADE BY LECOMPT UNTIL AFTER 4TH COMMITTEE VOTE. BERHANU NOTED THAT IF US DIPLOMAT HAD EITHER FAILED SO MISERABLY TO CARRY OUT HIS GOVERNMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS OR HAD DELIBERATELY TRIED TO BLOCK THEM, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN FIRED IMMEDIATELY. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS WAS NOT CASE WITH FRENCH. COMMENT: WE DOUBT IF LECOMPT IS EITHER INCAPABLE OR UNWILLING CARRY OUT GOF'S INSTRUCTIONS . END COMMENT.

3. ELABORATING ON LIKELIHOOD OF IMPROVED EPMG-GOF CO-OPERATION IN COMING MONTHS, BERHANU NOTED THAT INVI-CONFIDENTIAL

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TATIONS HAD NOT YET BEEN SENT BY GOF FOR JANUARY PARIS CONFERENCE. HE STATED MODALITIES OF CONFERENCE WOULD HAVE TO BE DIFFERENT FROM JUNE 1976 PARIS CONFERENCE OR CERTAIN GROUPS WOULD NOT ATTEND (READ UNI, MLD,MPL). HE ALSO STATED THAT IF POPULAR LIBERATION MOVEMENT (MPL) NOT INVITED TO CONFERENCE, NATIONAL UNION FOR INDEPENDENCE (UNI) AND MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF BJIBOUTI (MLD) WOULD NOT ATTTNED.

4. BERHANU INDICATED THAT POPULAR AFRICAN LEAGUE FOR INDEPENDENCE (LPAI) INTERESTED IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH EPMG. ASKED IF RECENT REFERENCE IN ADDIS FRENCH NEWSPAPER TO HASSAN GOULED AS "GRAND NATIONALIST DJIBOUTIEN" HAD BEEN EDITORIAL SLIP, BERHANU NOTED THAT GOULED WAS LONG-STANDING DJIBOUTI NATIONALIST AND CLEARLY IMPLIED GOULED ACCEPTABLE TO EPMG AS LEADER OF TFAI. STEPS WOULD HAVE TO BE TAKEN, HOWEVER, TO CURB PRO-SOMALI FACTIONS IN LPAI. INTERNAL POWER STRUGGLE NOW TAKING PLACE WITHIN LPAI BETWEEN PRO-INDEPENDENCE AND PRO-SOMALI FACTIONS. IF PRO-INDEPENDENCE FACTION WON OUT, IT WOULD BE POLITICAL END OF AHMED DINI WHO HEAD OF PRO-SOMALI FACTION. ACKNOWLEDGING THAT GOULED MOST LIKELY CHICE TO BE FIRST LEADER OF NEW REPUBLIC, BERHANU EXPRESSED HIS FEARS THAT GOULED WOULD BE ASSASINATED PRIOR TO

THAT TIME. IMPLICATION WAS THAT ATTEMPT WOULD BE MADE BY FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE SOMALI COAST (FLCS), WHICH HE CONTINUED TO MAINTAIN WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ANTI-LPAI DEMONSTRATIONS IN EARLY DECEMBER.

5. TURNING TO EPMG ACTIONS IF UNI, MLD, AND MPL NOT INVITED TO PARIS CONFERENCE, BERHANU STATED THAT FRENCH HAD NO CHOICE. IF FRENCH DID NOT ACCEDE TO THEIR PRESENCE IN PARIS, THEY COULD EXPECT A STRONG REACTION FROM THESE GROUPS IN DJIBOUTI. DUCKING QUESTION ON EXTENT EPMG ASSISTANCE TO THESE GROUPS, CONFIDENTIAL

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BERHANU NOTED THAT GSDR BUDGETING \$5 MILLION A YEAR TO SUPPORT THEIR EFFORTS IN DJIBOUTI.

6. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION AS TO WHY EPMG HAD NOT INVITED ABDALLAH KAMIL TO VISIT ADDIS IN VIEW EPMG DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH COALITION, BERHANU AGAIN FUDGED ANSWER. WHILE EPMG HAD NO OBJECTION TO SUCH VISIT, MOMENT PERHAPS NOT YET APPROPRIATE, GIVEN ILLEGAL METHOD HE HAD BEEN RAISED TO PRESIDENT. BERHANU ALSO PREDICTED THAT ABDALLAH KAMIL WOULD NOT LAST UNTIL INDEPENDENCE AS PRESIDENT, DESCRIBING KAMIL AS A "TOUGH MAN" AND ACKNOWLEDGING HIS CONNECTIONS WITH SULTAN ALI MIRAH.

7. BERHANU WAS NOT CLEAR AS TO WHETHER OR NOT ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD IN TFAI PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE. HE NOTED THAT IF KAMIL COULD OBTAIN SUPPORT OF FORMER UNI DELEGATES AND OF BARKAT GOURAT FACTION, ELECTION "WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY" AS KAMIL WOULD HAVE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY.

8. IN CLOSING BERHANU INDICATED THAT BOTH TAITTINGER AND QUAI UNDERSTOOD REAL THREAT POSED BY GSDR. AFTER AFFIRMING HIS VIEW THAT EPMG MILITARY ULTIMATE ARBITER, HE NOTED THAT THE US ACTED AS IF IT DIDN'T CARE. THE USG HAD NOT DONE ANYTHING AND WAS NOT DOING ENOUGH. HE REPEATED CALL MADE DURING SCOTT AND RICHARDSON VISITS FOR US PUBLIC STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF INDEPENDENT DJIBOUTI. AT SAME TIME, HE NOTED SOVIET POSITION HAD BEEN VERY "WISHY-WASHY" AND THAT SOVIET POSITION UNCLEAR ON DJIBOUTI. NOTING THAT PROBLEMS IN DJIBOUTI WOULD RAPIDLY ACCELERATE AFTER REFERENDUM, HE EMPHASIZED THAT IT WAS MOST IMPORTANT THAT ALL CONCERNED PARTIES WERE CLEAR ON DEVELOPMENTS IN DJIBOUTI, FOR IF VARIOUS PARTIES MISREAD SIGNALS, THERE WOULD DEFINITELY BE WAR IN THE AREA. CONFIDENTIAL

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9. COMMENT: IT WOULD APPEAR THAT EPMG HAS FINALLY GIVEN UP THE GHOST OF ALI AREF AND IS NOW STRUGGLING TO FORMULATE NEW COALITION FAVORABLE TO EPMG INTERESTS. EPMG FACED WITH SOMEWHAT OF A QUANDARY, SINCE AHMED DINI CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE AND ABDALLAH KAMIL TO A GREAT EXTENT OWES HIS PRESENT POSITION TO EPMG EXILED SULTAN ALI MIRAH. EPMG MIGHT WELL CONSIDER THROWING ITS RESOURCES BEHIND SOME UNSPECIFIED AFAR WHO WOULD SUPPORT HASSAN GOULED AND CREATE PRO-INDEPENDENCE ALLIANCE MORE FAVORABLE TO EPMG INTERESTS. PERCEPTION FROM ETHIOPIAN VANTAGE POINT THAT MAJOR DIFFERENCES EXIST BETWEEN QUAI AND DOM-TOM ON DJIBOUTI POLICY. DIFFERENCES NO DOUBT REFLECT QUAI'S IMMEDIATE PROBLEM ON HOW TO CALM ETHIOPIAN FEARS AND DOM-TOM'S FEAR AS TO PROBLEMS WHICH WILL RESULT IN DJIBOUTI IF IT APPEARS GOF AGAIN ATTEMPTING TO SELL OUT ISSAS TO APPEASE EPMG. AT THE SAME TIME FRENCH FACED WITH REAL PROBLEM THAT IF THEY ACCEDE TO MAJORITY OF EPMG DESIRES, REACTION OF GSDR AND FLCS WILL NOT BE LONG IN COMING. END COMMENT.
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